



# Site Investigation

## Jewett White Lead Company Site Port Richmond, Staten Island, New York

Community Update

September 2009

### Results

In early June, EPA collected a total of 248 soil samples from the Port Richmond Community. Soil samples were also collected from the backyards of 13 homes located immediately next to the site in the one block area bound by Park Avenue, Ann Street and Heberton Avenue.

Lead was found at an average concentration of 549 parts per million (ppm) in the top soils of the backyards sampled. This level of lead is higher than the EPA screening level of 400 ppm for lead in residential high use bare soil areas.

Lead was detected in the grassy areas sampled both in the background and in the area surrounding the site. The lead levels seen in the grassy area closest to the site are comparable to the levels detected in the background area.

The average concentration of lead in the six-block area closest to the site is 666 ppm, while the average concentration of lead seen in the background area is 788 ppm.

Lead was found at much lower levels in the road grit collected from the street curb lines. The overall average lead found in the road grit collected from all areas is 177 ppm, while the one block area surrounding the site was 132 ppm.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is providing this notice to update you regarding the progress made at the Jewett White Lead Company site.

### Site Investigation

EPA collected soil samples in the Port Richmond Community during the week of June 8th to June 12th to determine if the lead found in soils at the former Jewett White Lead Company site located at 2000 Richmond Terrace (on the corner of Richmond Terrace and Park Avenue) has affected the surrounding neighborhood.

A total of 248 soil samples were collected from the backyards of homes closest to the site and from the grassy areas on sidewalks in a six-block area closest to the site. Background samples were collected in other grassy sidewalk areas approximately one-quarter mile away from the site. All sampling activities were coordinated with local and state officials.

Although we have found elevated levels of lead in the community we have not yet been able to tie these directly to the Jewett White Lead site. We're continuing tests to see if we can identify the lead by using a sort of "fingerprint" that would tell us if Jewett was a significant contributing source. If Jewett is found to be a significant contributing source to the lead found in the community, EPA will take appropriate action to address the associated health risks. It is likely, however, that at least some of the lead comes from other sources, including lead-based paint and lead left over in the environment from when we still used leaded gasoline. Once the investigation is complete, a decision on whether additional sampling or a cleanup is needed will be made.

### Simple Steps to Reduce Your Lead Exposure

EPA and the State and City health departments recommend that the following steps be followed to reduce your exposure to lead:

- Keep children away from all bare soil areas, and cover any bare soil areas that may be on your property. Plant grass seed or place sod on the bare soil. Maintaining any grass already present in your yard will also prevent contact with the soil.
- Have all children between the ages of six months and six years tested regularly for lead.
- Adults and children should frequently wash hands and face, especially after they come inside from the yard, and before

**Any Questions:**

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**For Health Related Questions:**

Chris Duroski  
New York State Department of Health  
800-458-1158 ext. 27860

New York City Department of Health  
and Mental Hygiene

Dial 3-1-1 and ask for the Lead  
Poisoning Prevention Program

**EPA Regional Public Liaison:**

EPA Region 2 has designated a public liaison as a point-of-contact for community concerns and questions about the federal Superfund program in New York, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. To support this effort, the Agency has established a 24-hour, toll-free number that the public can call to request information, express concerns, or register complaints about Superfund. The public liaison for EPA's Region 2 office is:

George Zachos  
732-321-6621 or 888-283-7626  
Zachos.george@epa.gov

Visit EPA's Web sites at:

[www.epa.gov/region2/superfund/removal/jewettwhitelead](http://www.epa.gov/region2/superfund/removal/jewettwhitelead)

eating or drinking.

- If you are a smoker, wash your hands before smoking.
- Remove shoes at the door to prevent tracking in dirt.
- Use a damp mop and cloths to keep floors, children's toys and other surfaces clear of dust.
- Don't let your children play on the lawn right after you have mowed or raked it, because soil could be on the grass clippings or on the material that you raked.

**Steps to Reduce Lead Exposure While Gardening**

If you have a garden or plan to have a garden, you can take the following steps to minimize your exposure to the lead present in the soils:

1. If the soil is acidic, add lime to the garden to reduce the acidity. Acidic soil increases the amount of lead available to plants;
2. Add organic matter such as compost, manure, or phosphate containing fertilizers to garden soil. The organic matter binds lead and reduces the amount available to plants. Organic mulch, such as straw, grass clippings, or wood chips can reduce the dust and the "splatter" of soil onto leafy vegetables from rain. Using a phosphate containing fertilizer in the yard will help grass grow and bind lead to the soil;
3. Because fruiting vegetables (like tomatoes, cucumbers or peppers) take up less lead from the soil than leafy vegetable or root crops, you may choose to grow more fruiting vegetables instead of leaf or root crops;
4. Discard the outer lower leaves of leafy crops and peel all root crops;
5. Thoroughly wash vegetables before eating to help remove any dirt that may contain lead. Adding a little vinegar to the wash water helps remove lead more effectively.

**Lead-Based Paint Hazards**

The presence of lead-based paint on the inside or outside surfaces of a home can be a significant source of lead exposure to residents, especially children if the paint is peeling or in poor condition. EPA recommends that residents have their homes tested for the presence of lead-based paint.

**Site Background**

The former Jewett White Lead Company site is an unpaved vacant lot located at 2000 Richmond Terrace, in the Borough of Staten Island, New York. It was used by John Jewett & Sons White Lead Company and National Lead Industries to produce white lead. Various other businesses operated at this location including Sedutto's Ice Cream factory.